A

SERMON

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

PREACHED AT MONSON, AT THE UNITED SERVICE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL AND METHODIST CHURCHES,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

NATIONAL FAST,

JUNE 1, 1865.

BY CHARLES HAMMOND,

Principal of Monson Academy.

SPRINGFIELD:
SAMUEL BOWLES AND COMPANY, PRINTERS.
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CORRESPONDENCE.

MONSON, June 8, 1865.

REV. CHARLES HAMMOND:

Dear Sir,—It was the privilege of the undersigned to listen to your able discourse, delivered on the day of our National Fast, on the life and services of our late lamented President Lincoln; and believing that the views there expressed are eminently just, and appreciative, we hereby respectfully solicit a copy of the same for publication.

We remain,

Very sincerely,

Yours,

F. ALVORD.
D. N. COBURN.
T. G. COLTON.
H. P. SATCHWELL.
JAMES TUFTS.
CYRUS W. HOLMES.
H. LYON.
CYRUS W. HOLMES, JR.
ALBERT NORCROSS.

MONSON, June 12, 1865.

Gentlemen,—The sermon, which you have kindly requested for publication, is placed at your disposal.

Yours truly,

C. HAMMOND.

TO REV. MESSRS. ALVORD, COBURN, COLTON, SATCHWELL, AND OTHERS.

SERMON.

II. SAMUEL iii. 34: As a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him.

THE person referred to in the text, was Abner, a leader of Israel who perished by the hand of an assassin, and for whose death, the whole land was filled with mourning. His murder was the result of the bitter controversies of the time, which had divided into hostile sections, a people having a common history, a common religion, and common dangers. A long civil war existed between the house of David and the house of Saul—but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul weaker and weaker, until the North and the South of the land of Palestine, ended their mutual strifes, by the election of David as the ruler of the whole people.

Abner was chiefly influential in translating the kingdom from the house of Saul and setting up the throne of David over all the land. But he had barely accomplished his great work of union and conciliation, when he was struck dead without a moment's warning—and the joy of the nation, at the prospect of permanent peace, was turned to universal grief.

At the great national funeral at Hebron, "the king himself followed the bier, and lifted up his voice and wept at the

grave of Abner, and the people wept with him." And the king said, in his lamentation or funeral address to his servants, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel." And then he justified his character and motives, as upright and patriotic, and refuted the pretense of the assassin that Abner was treacherous and worthy of a traitor's death. He says, "Thy hands were not bound nor thy feet put into fetters," as a criminal should be—but, "as a man falleth among wicked men, so fellest thou"—that is, as an innocent man falls, or as the best of men may fall by the hand of the worst, so fellest thou—"and all the people wept again over him" as they heard the vindication of the king, and listened to his awful imprecations on the murderer and on all his father's house.

When Mr. Seward was first told of the assassination of the President he said, "History is only repeating itself. Great revolutions and rebellions generate great crimes." We have seen in the history of Israel, one analogous instance—and in modern nations, crimes of a similar character have been committed—but who of us expected that such repetitions would occur in this land, that the roll of the American Presidents would be stained forever with blood, and that he must be the first victim, who was the mildest and most genial of them all—in whose heart there was "malice for none, with charity for all" mankind, whether friends or foes. And yet there on that honored list, beginning with Washington, the name of Lincoln stands, written in blood, as the memento of the most awful tragedy in the book of time.

The shock first caused by this event, has in a measure subsided, though its impression remains, not to be effaced from the memory of living men. The great national funeral is past. The resting-place of the illustrious dead has been reached, by that procession which traversed great States, and gathered the populations of great cities in its countless train, and formed such a pageant of real mourning, as has

never yet followed the remains of a king or conqueror to the tomb.

Before the completion of these funeral honors, a quick retribution had intercepted the assassin in his flight. The ancient maxim, that "though justice has a lame foot her step is sure," has in this case been reversed. For in the next instant after the perpetration of the crime, the foot of the criminal was lamed and the course of justice was fleet. What a marvelous vindication of the law, violated in the person of its highest, most revered functionary? How like a miracle that the National Flag, hitherto but an emblem everywhere of the national authority, should in this instance, really, and literally, and instantly interpose an effectual obstruction, entangling the feet of the fugitive in its folds, making his escape impossible and his doom certain, disabling him, by what must have proved a mortal wound, even though the ministers of justice had not overtaken him.

The great Rebellion, having consummated its blackest crime, has suddenly vanished from the sight of the troubled nations, just as the Fury did, when having filled the world with discord, she relieved the heavens and the earth, as she sank into the jaws of hell in the vale of Amsanctus.*

Meanwhile the whole American people are called this day, to consider the character and services of our late President, whose untimely death not America only, but the whole world deplores.

How can we even approach so great a theme, or begin to trace even the outlines of that influence in the world, caused by the life and death of such a man?

All we can do is to consider briefly a few of the thoughts the occasion itself suggests.

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* "ruptoque ingens Acheronte vorago
Pestiferas aperit fauces, queis condita Erinys
Invisum numen terras coelumque levabat."

And one remark, we venture at the outset, that human speculation is utterly unable to scan the purposes of Divine Providence in such a calamity as this. And yet, from the day of Mr. Lincoln's death, there have not been wanting those, who have presumed upon their ability to penetrate so profound a mystery. Some of the public journals have come to the conclusion, that on the whole the country is a gainer rather than a loser, in a change of the national administration, interpreting the will of Providence, to be in favor of sterner measures of retribution against the rebellious States, and thus allowing the greatest of crimes to become the instrument of overthrowing a policy of mercy and conciliation. Such a theory of the Divine purposes in the recent events, suggests darker questions than it solves.

It is easy to see that the relations of the government to the rebellion, are greatly changed by so grave an event as Mr. Lincoln's death. If his death had occurred from natural causes, it would in the present crisis of national affairs have been a momentous event—for it would have necessitated a new administration, and the chance of a different policy—though not the certainty of a different one. But his most unnatural death, may render a change of policy a necessity, thus adding new perils to those already existing. It is perhaps necessary now to talk of justice and not of mercy, for the reason that the murder of Mr. Lincoln, may have transformed, what seemed ordinary into most extraordinary traitors.

But the character and fame of Mr. Lincoln can have nothing to do with questions of policy, which his own death has started. His administration cannot be criticised as faulty, because of the exigencies of the present hour. Because a severe policy is justifiable now, it does not follow that we needed such an one before he died. We must judge of Mr. Lincoln's character and policy by the circumstances of his own time. We know, that that policy in its time was

approved by the American people. They determined by his re-election, their opinion of his fitness to hold the reins of administration—and there is no evidence now to show, that that opinion would have been changed, if his life had been spared.

We remark again, that the administration of the Republic in the darkest days of its history, shows that Mr. Lincoln had the rarest executive qualities of a good civil ruler. He was a real ruler, not a ruler over-ruled. He was able to receive the aid of his cabinet without being swayed by it. "In the multitude of counselors there is safety," says the wise man, but whether he meant safety to the counselors or the counseled, has been a question. That Mr. Lincoln was his own ablest counselor, was one of his grandest qualities as a ruler.

Every good ruler must meet exigencies of administration in peaceful times—when wisdom and promptness in a high degree, are requisite, but in times of disaster and civil war, such as have been witnessed rarely in the world's history, Mr. Lincoln's was equal to the duty of meeting the greatest perils, and of originating policies and methods of management never tried before.

A weak ruler, invested with the responsibility of government instinctively turns to rules and precedents—but a man of wisdom and strength, values precedents only for the force of reason there is in them. He will have need of insight and foresight, to discern what is real and what is fanciful or false—to judge intuitively of the motives and passions and purposes, both of friends and foes—and to estimate correctly, all policies and artifices, all methods and instrumentalities. Through all the disastrous days and years of the long conflict, it was a gift of superlative greatness in Mr. Lincoln to know just how much, and how little to say and to do.

It matters not here to inquire how he became possessed of this great gift of practical wisdom. It is quite certain

that he had it. We ask not, whether his executive powers were innate or acquired, whether nature or circumstances made him what he was. It is a vain question to ask what can a talented man do, without an opportunity, and it is a question nearly as vain, to ask whether an opportunity to do great things, can come to a man without talents.

The "mute Miltons" and the "guiltless Cromwells" are nowhere found, save in country church-yards, where the imagination of the poet Gray found them, or in country schools, where there is always a large supply. The real Miltons and Cromwells, owe their renown to the inseparable connection of talent and opportunity, or if success in life must be reduced to a single element in the analysis of causes, it may be said, to depend on the tact of laying hold of chances or of turning opportunities to good account—and for doing this, what is called education sometimes helps and sometimes hinders, so that it is a hard problem to show the relation of education to life, in such men, as Washington and Franklin and Lincoln. We know, nevertheless, that with comparatively few advantages of early instruction, they were able to cope with and easily surpass many, who had enjoyed the best chances of early training.

A close observer, however, will be likely to discover, in all such instances, an actual previous training, which answered the essential needs of life-work so well, that the regular authorized steps and courses of study, as indicated by graduations, diplomas or other public recognitions, could not have been of much more account.

We have heard that Mr. Lincoln, before he was thought of as a candidate for the Presidency, delivered a speech in New Haven, just previous to a closely contested State election, and that the students and professors of Yale College were among his auditors. His speech was so effective that he was waited upon by one of the professors, who in admiration of his skill, wished to know the sources of his power. A master in the art of persuasion, wishes to take lessons of

the self-taught orator. He is puzzled as one of old was, in like circumstances. "How knoweth this man letters having never learned."

The professor soon found, that Mr. Lincoln, like Cicero, knew the secrets of his art, and could give the methods and processes of his self-taught training, which, after all, had nothing marvelous in them, save the energy and the patience, and the success of the learner. He became distinguished, as all learners in any study or calling do, by discipline and close attention, and by a determined will to realize his own ideal of an effective thinker and speaker. To be sure, he was not like other writers and popular orators in his style or address—and it is refreshing to meet with such a marked exception to the stereotyped pattern of rhetorical excellence, as we do in this case.

One of his characteristics, was a wonderful brevity united with comprehensiveness. He was like Roger Sherman in this respect, who in his long career as a lawyer and judge and member of Congress, was never known to speak on any topic however important, more than fifteen minutes.

At the Gettysburg celebration, Edward Everett was the orator. It was an occasion suited to the genius of the man, and he made one of his greatest efforts, modeled as every scholar expected it would be, after the classic funeral orations of the great masters. Mr. Everett's address was full of instruction and interest, and it had the common merit of great American orations, that it was very long. On the same occasion, President Lincoln delivered a speech of not more than half a page of printed matter, which, for fitness and force, for point and pathos, for all the qualities that makes words effective when spoken, or famous when written, shall go down to the future ages, as a gem of eloquence unsurpassed by Everett or any of his peers.

That Mr. Lincoln was brief in his public addresses, in his State papers and correspondence was one of his glorious innovations. Not affluent, yet how weighty were his

words, as in his emancipation proclamation and his last Inaugural, a document of deathless fame.

I have no patience with that opinion, which allows goodness but not greatness to our late President. All admit that he was a man of talents, that is, of usefulness, but some deny that he had genius—much that has been written of him involves this view of his character.

But Mr. Emerson's estimate is more just and comprehensive. "The weight and penetration of many passages in his speeches, letters and messages, hidden now by the closeness of their application to the moment, are destined hereafter to a wide fame. What pregnant definitions, what unerring common sense, what foresight, and on great occasions, what lofty and more than national, what humane tone.

It cannot be said there was any exaggeration of his worth. If any man was ever fairly tested, he was. There was no lack of resistance, nor of slander, nor of ridicule.

What an occasion was the whirlwind of war. Here was no place for a holiday magistrate, no fair weather sailor. The new pilot was hurried to the helm in a tornado. In four years of battle days his endurance, his fertility of resources, his magnanimity were sorely tried and never found wanting.

Then by his courage, his justice, his even temper, his fertile counsel, his humanity, he stood a heroic figure in a heroic epoch. He is the true history of the American people in his time. Step by step he walked before them—slow with their slowness, quickening his march with theirs the true representative of this continent—the pulse of twenty millions throbbing in his heart—the thought of their minds articulated by his tongue."

But the crowning glory of Mr. Lincoln as a ruler, was his inflexible integrity.

Strange indeed, does it seem, that moral uprightness should ever come to be considered as a disqualification for

high official trusts—that a candidate might be really too good a man to be popular.

In Washington's day, the words patriot and politician suggested the same idea. Now they signify ideas most opposite. Previous to the war of the rebellion, the whole system of politics had become utterly demoralized by the "cankers of a calm world and a long peace." No man was elected to office by unsought suffrages except in the rarest instances. And when chosen, the candidate must pay for his place. The cardinal points of policy in every party, were to reward friends and punish enemies.

But when scheming politicians fell out with each other, by accident, or rather by the direct interposition of Providence, let us reverently say, a President was for once elected, who had virtues of the old Roman stamp—especially the virtue of sterling *honesty*. Hence the people gave him their unwavering confidence, and by that confidence he became strong in spite of the politicians. His presence in the seats of power, at the close of the venal administration of his predecessor, caused a dismay like that, when the money-changers were driven from the temple.

When the war broke out, and fear and trembling every where was prevalent, it was the confidence of the people in the inflexible honesty of Mr. Lincoln, that saved the nation from despair—and prevented the success of the rebel cause, which otherwise would have been triumphant, and today the Confederacy might have been recognized among the nations with slavery as its chief corner stone.

When we analyze the awful crime "which makes the land to tremble and every one to mourn that dwelleth therein," we shall find, that it is the virtue of the victim which makes that "offence so rank" a tragedy, unequaled in history, hardly in fiction.

The reckless daring of the assassin, the unparalleled atrocity of the assault in the presence of dearest friends, and in a great public assembly; the malice of the murder,

unmitigated by the least personal provocation, having, as its motives, the revenge of a cause utterly wicked when utterly hopeless, and the fiendish ambition of committing the greatest of crimes just for the name of it—the suddenness of the event, as if a bolt from the heavens had fallen from out the clear blue sky—these are tragic elements in the dreadful drama—but the fearfulest one of all—that which has moved the hearts of the country and of all mankind, as they have never been moved in the modern ages, is the moral dignity of the sufferer. He who fills the loftiest place, not in power only, but in the reverent love of the world for his goodness, must fall, though of all men, least deserving to die.

This chief magistrate of one of the greatest and most powerful nations, whose triumphant re-election by his friends, and the unwilling homage wrested from his foes, had vindicated his first administration as one of unsurpassed ability—who had "borne his faculties meekly" and "was clear in his great office," must fall, as unforewarned as was Duncan in his sleep, and leave forever that post of honor and trust, which none could fill as well as he.

To kill any man is an awful crime—to commit murder for pelf, for ambition is more awful still—but to destroy the guiltless because they are innocent—to blot out of being the best administrative talent in the land, that the light of wisdom and goodness may be quenched, that the nations may be perplexed with confusion, that all men may walk in darkness in troublous times—what shall we say of a murder with motives like these—and just such a murder laid Mr. Lincoln low. And hence, comes the intensity of the national grief, which is another tragic element in this great historic drama. Hence it is that his virtues have become pleading angels trumpet-tongued.

> "And pity, like a naked new-born babe
> Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, hors'd
> Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
> Doth blow the horrid deed in every eye,
> That tears do drown the wind."

It was a blow struck at all the good and true men of the world. It was not strange then, that for a time the hopes of all loyal hearts were dashed in utter disappointment—that apprehension of immediate peril, flashed with the dreadful news from one end of the continent to the other—that the gladness of the nation's most glorious victories was instantly quenched—that the voices of universal song were stilled by this visitation of overwhelming woe. The ancient prophecy was fulfilled to the letter :—"I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation—and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day."

> "All things, that we ordained festival,
> Turned from their office to black funeral;
> Our instruments to melancholy bells,
> Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges changed,
> Our bridal flowers served for a buried corse,
> And all things changed them to the contrary."

It is a ground of bitter lamentation, that the nation has lost a chief magistrate of the rarest administrative ability, and one who possessed the greatest public confidence, at a time when those forces of strength were needed, which practical wisdom and confidence only could give.

Leaving out of the account the appalling circumstances of his death, no calamity so great could befall the nation, as a change of the chief ruler at such a time. When the ship of state is tossed upon a troubled sea, and the breakers are heard from off a rocky shore, it is perilous indeed to lose the pilot from the helm. It is a dreadful calamity to be obliged, at such a time, to try the fearful experiment whether his successor is of equal ability.

The clouds are breaking away indeed, and the light is shining through them, and the din of war is hushed, and the flag of the Union waves once more over all the land; but we are not free from danger yet. A work of pacification is

to be consummated, in which all the States and races and generations, of those who are to dwell on this continent, are vitally interested. If peace hath its victories no less than war, it has its perils and defeats also, more perilous than war.

After the long conflict, the land has rest, but it is, as yet, a troubled rest. All thoughtful men are perplexed with the momentous problems of the hour. There is a lull in the strife of material forces, and parties, and sections, and races. But the stillness may be like "the silence in heaven for the space of half an hour," after the opening of the seventh seal, before the seven trumpets of woe were sounded.

There are, in the now confused and upheaved elements of American civilization, antagonistic interests and prejudices and principles and policies. Most earnest will be the strife of tongues and pens, as the era of interminable debate shall open, and the revolution, deep and radical, goes on, which shall change the ideas and customs, and sympathies and institutions, of all sections of the land, more or less.

Now, who is sufficient for the mighty responsibility of a chief ruler, at such a time as this? What power of personal influence to secure the supremacy of the dominant party, long enough to allow time for great plans and measures to mature themselves? for new ideas and new institutions to become rooted, and grow and bear fruit?

Where can we look for a ruler now, who, by his prudence, by his moderation, by his benevolence, by his trust in God, shall be able to soothe the intense exasperations of those defeated in their darling aims,—to restrain the violence of victory in its triumph over the vanquished—to deal fairly and faithfully and honestly and justly—to temper mercy with rigor in due proportion, when so many have incurred the extreme penalties of justice—to lead great States back to their allegiance to the authority of law, of reason, of truth,

and personal conscience—to kindle once more the fires of a pure patriotism, on so many altars now cast down or abandoned, or burning still with the unholy fires of hate and rebellion against the best government the sun ever shone upon.

There is no reason to doubt the lofty patriotism of the present incumbent. By the voice of the American people, he was appointed to stand in the place of the great leader we have lost; and he ought and will receive the candid and cordial support of every friend of law and liberty in the land. And yet we must account the death of Mr. Lincoln, under any circumstances, by any causes, the greatest possible calamity which could befall the country, at the present crisis of our national affairs.

While his great ability to rule the State in time of war, has been shown, we believe that Mr. Lincoln would have won even a greater fame at the head of a peaceful administration. As in war, so in peace, would he have secured the first place in the hearts of his countrymen. We had fondly hoped that the glory of Washington was to be repeated once more in our history. But God in his inscrutable Providence forbids a recurrence of that glory which now seems destined for no American President save the first. Great as was Washington's glory in the field, it was greater in the cabinet. The Romulus and the Numa of our heroic age, were united in one person the greatest and the most fortunate in history, for he lived to win complete success and to enjoy its rewards in the homage of all mankind. But Mr. Lincoln, the leader of an epoch in the annals of his country, greater than the Revolution, died in the midst of a career of glory, which had it been completed, would have conferred a renown equal, if not greater, than that, which the Father of his Country enjoyed. He perished, as did the great deliverer of Israel, while yet in the Wilderness, though its perils seemed safely passed, not being permitted to enter the promised land, but only from that mount of vision which

he alone could ascend, to enjoy the rapture of one glimpse of its peace and rest, on the very day he died.*

While we lament the untimely fall of so great a man, we know his influence cannot wholly die. He lived long enough to accomplish a work,† which shall affect the destiny of every race in all their generations hereafter to dwell under the sway of the United States of America. His name like that of Washington's, will ere long in every section of the Union be blessed with "perpetual benedictions."

For the name and the fame of Mr. Lincoln will be forever connected with that civil war, in which the supremacy of the constitution was first called in question and settled forever by its unmistakable vindication. His renown will also be inseparably connected with the grand incidental result of this civil war, the re-establishment of liberty for the whole American people, for all races, and for every section of the country.

The value of our victory, consists not in the conquest of the material forces of the rebellion, but in the triumph of principle—in the utter annihilation of those political doctrines which led to the direst anarchy. The Calhoun heresy of secession is extirpated. The great Nullifier is nullified. Our own Webster "STILL LIVES!" The National Union shall stand forever.

The war just ended, will be the last under the constitution for the defence of its authority. The dread experi-

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* It is said, that after a cabinet meeting held on the fatal day, in which a plan of conciliation and reconstruction had been approved, Mr. Lincoln rode out with his wife and during the drive, remarked that in view of public affairs, it was to him the happiest day he had seen since he came to Washington.

† The prophecy of the Latin poet can never be better applied :—

"Jamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira nec ignes,
Nec poterit *ferrum*, nec edax abolere vetustas.
Ore legar populi, perque omnia secula fama,
Si quid habeat veri vatum præsagia, vivam."

ment of resisting its power will not be repeated. The rivers of blood poured out, the wide waste of trampling armies, the loss of countless millions of treasure, for the defence of a government the mildest, the most beneficent the sun ever shone upon, will be beacons of everlasting warning against another rebellion.

The generations to come must indeed be involved in the debt incurred in the great struggle; but we shall transmit a most precious boon, worth all its cost, to be the possession of all the future.

The incidental result of the war, in the establishment of universal liberty, gives a value to the contest now closed, such as no words or thoughts of men can estimate. The direct object of the rebellion was to establish slavery forever; and the inevitable result would have been universal anarchy, or absolute despotism. We aimed to establish the laws; and the consequence of our success has been the removal of every vestige of slavery. We all know how intricate was the problem of American slavery before the war began. We know how the veriest axioms of political truth, as understood by our fathers, were denied, and that slavery was arrogantly claimed as of divine ordination, and sanctioned by the teachings of the Bible. This theory of awful blasphemy, seemed about to be invested with all the dignity and energy which nationality could confer. But God interposed, and hurled the bolts of his displeasure against such monstrous impiety. He settled the great question, in the way John Quincy Adams long ago said it could be settled—by the instrumentality of war—if the owners of slaves should ever presume to rebel. In their madness, they did rebel, and Mr. Lincoln, by his proclamation of emancipation, fulfilled the divine decree, while he invoked the "considerate judgment of mankind." And thus have the ransomed of the Lord gone forth, with songs of triumph, from the house of bondage, while all the forces of oppression have been buried in the depths of the sea.

In the exultation of the hour we may forget that the decree of emancipation has brought liberty to more than the African race. It is really an era of liberty and light and joy unspeakable, for all men and all races and all nations. For the fetters of the slave chained the master to his chattel. The woe and wretchedness of the accursed relation has not been all on one side. It has been a reciprocal evil, greater even for the master than for the *bondsman* chained as they both have been together as a living body to a dead.

"While the South held fast the negro in his bondage," said Prof. Parsons of Cambridge, "they accepted it with all its disastrous consequences, with all its effects on their material interests, on their political and social condition, on their personal lives and on their very souls. And because they accepted it at length they came to love it, and because they loved it, they could not see it was the very cause of their relative inferiority, and so they cast the blame of this inferiority upon our common nationality."*

But that delusion is past or soon will be—and with it will go all the heresies of the nullification school, and all the slavery commentaries of Southern divines, such as the Palmers, and the Thornwalls.

> "The flocking shadows pale,
> Troop to the infernal jail,
> Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave."

In this great conflict of principles, on the arena of the greatest civil war of modern times, Mr. Lincoln was the hero of a revolution of ideas and institutions greater than was the political revolution of which Washington was the impersonation.

Now that we have succeeded in the mighty strife, even beyond all our expectations, because the Lord was on our

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* See address before the civil authorities of Boston, July 4, 1861, by Prof. Theophilus Parsons, of Harvard College.

side, we may hope for an interminable lease of the national life. We may hope that the people of all sections of the land, made wiser and more serious, by discipline and sore bereavement, will have a deep and abiding sense of the value of good government, of the necessity of the National Union, of a disposition to regard the rights of all sections, and parties, and clans, and races. We trust that the people will feel that the stability of our times and of all times, rests on justice, righteousness, knowledge and virtue—that great and good men in all stations of official trust are the nation's greatest benefactors—that in God alone, in all national, as in personal trials and sorrows, is our help and refuge—for "except the Lord keep the city the watchmen waketh but in vain."